

## CLAIMS

1. A method for stick handling training for a hockey player comprising:

stick handling a rolling element, with an element weight to hockey puck weight ratio of 1.3 or greater, between two positions on a practice surface using a hockey stick;

said practice surface having a higher resistance to sliding of the rolling element than to rolling of the rolling element;

said hockey stick comprising a shaft portion held by the hockey player with an upper hand and a lower hand and having a blade portion attached to the shaft portion for stick handling the rolling element; and,

wherein said stick handling the rolling elements comprising:

applying a first torque to the shaft portion of the hockey stick using the upper hand tightly gripped thereon for rolling the rolling element across the practice surface in a first direction;

applying a second torque, opposite in rotation from the first torque, to the shaft portion of the hockey stick using the upper hand tightly gripped thereon for rolling the rolling element across the practice surface in a second direction substantially opposite to the first direction; and,

using the lower hand loosely gripped to the shaft portion to guide the blade portion of the hockey stick during rotation thereof and to move the blade portion between the two positions on the practice surface.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the element weight to hockey puck weight ratio is 3.2 or greater.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the two positions on the practice surface are substantially 610 mm, (24 inches) apart.

4.. The method of claim 3 further comprising the steps of performing practice sets of thirty or more repetitions of moving the rolling element between the two positions.

5. The method of claim 3 further comprising the steps of:

stick handling a plurality of rolling elements each having a different element weight to hockey puck weight ratio; and,

performing a practice set comprising stick handling each of the plurality of rolling elements between the two positions for thirty or more repetitions.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein a practice session comprises three or more practice sets of stick handling each of the plurality of rolling elements between the two positions and further comprising the step of performing two or more practice sessions per day for more than 30 days.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the rolling element comprises a spherical element.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the rolling element comprises a cylindrical element.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the rolling element comprises a solid steel ball.

10. The method of claim 5 wherein each of the plurality of rolling elements having a different element weight to hockey puck weight ratio comprises a plurality of solid steel balls each having a different ball diameter.

11. A hockey stick handling training device for use with a hockey stick comprising:

a spherical element having a weight to hockey puck ratio of greater than 1.3 and a diameter of 38 mm, (1.5 inches) or greater; and,

a practice surface for stick handling the spherical element between two positions on the surface, wherein said surface provides a higher resistance to sliding of the spherical element than to rolling of the spherical element.

12. The hockey training device of claim 11 wherein the spherical element has a bounce height of less than 5 inches when dropped onto the practice surface from a height of 36 inches.

13. The hockey training device of claim 11 wherein the spherical element comprises a solid steel ball.

14. The hockey training device of claim 11 wherein the practice surface comprises a substantially smooth and flat surface formed by a substantially uniformly thick layer of one of, polyester, urethane foam, polyester with a vinyl facing, neoprene, ethylene vinyl acetone, silicone and polyethylene.

15. The hockey training device of claim 11 further comprising a plurality of spherical elements each having a different weight to hockey puck ratio.

16. The hockey training device of claim 15 wherein each of the plurality of spherical elements comprises a steel ball having a different diameter.

17. A method for stick handling training with a hockey stick, said hockey stick including a shaft portion and a blade portion comprising:

holding the stick shaft portion with an upper hand near a top end of the shaft portion and holding the stick shaft portion with a lower hand below the upper hand and positioned between 254 - 356 mm, (10 - 14 inches) apart from the upper hand;

positioning a practice ball having a weight of at least 226.8 grams, (8 ounces) on a practice surface, the practice surface providing a higher resistance to sliding of the practice ball than to rolling of the practice ball, the practice surface having dimensions of between 750 - 1220 mm (29.5 - 48 inches) long by 460 - 685 mm, (18.1 - 26.5 inches) wide;

rolling the practice ball between two positions substantially 610 mm (24 inches) apart using a torque applied to the stick shaft by the upper hand while merely guiding the stick with the lower hand; and,

repeating the rolling of the practice ball between the two positions alternately using a forehand and a backhand stick handling motion of the stick blade portion for a set of 30 or more repetitions.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising the steps of performing sets of 30 or more repetitions using each of a plurality of practice balls, wherein each of the plurality of practice balls has a different weight in the range of 226.8 grams, (8 ounces) to 1814 grams (64 ounces).

19. A hockey stick handling practice kit comprising four solid steel balls having weights ranging from 220 grams (8 ounces) up to 1815 grams (64 ounces) and having diameters ranging from 41 mm, (1.63 inches) to 85 mm, (3 inches) for stick handling with a hockey stick on a practice surface, said practice surface having a coefficient of friction between 0.3 and 0.9.

20. The hockey stick handling kit of claim 19 further comprising a mat for placing on a floor for providing said practice surface, said mat having dimensions of between 750 - 1220 mm (29.5 - 48 inches) long by 460 - 685 mm, (18.1 -26.5 inches) wide, and wherein the mat comprises a layer of one of polyester, urethane foam, polyester with vinyl facing, neoprene, ethylene vinyl acetone, silicone and polyethylene, the mat having a layer thickness in the range of 10 - 51 mm, (0.5 - 2.0 inches).

21. The hockey stick handling kit of claim 19 further comprising a fifth practice ball having weight of less than 50 grams (1.7 ounces) and a diameter of substantially 41 mm, (1.6 inches).